FREE SOCIETY

ENTERED AT SAN FRANCISCO POSTOFFICE AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER.

An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism: Holding that Equality of Opportunity alone Constitutes Liberty; that in the Absence of Monopoly Price and Competition Cannot Exist, and that Communism is an Inevitable Consequence.

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DRY BONES.

Hark!—rattle! rattle! rattle!—
Ah!—the rattle of dead men's bones
Over century cobble stones,—
'Tis music, wierd, drear,
That comes from yon bier,
Decorated (we groan!)
With customs which shone
Resplendently gay
In savagery's day.

Hark!—rattle! rattle! rattle!—
Yes, the rattle of dead men's bones
Over century cobble stones,—
From th' coffin pol s law!—
It may have been raw—
Just when, we can't tell
By its rotten smell,—
'Tis more than just musty—
And never was dusty;

Hark!—rattle! rattle! rattle!—
Yet, rattle dead men's bones
Over centur cobble stones!—
Bless me! here, scatt'ring out,
Wormeaten, but stout
Are gods! superstitions!—
And lengthy editions
Of sky platted deeds,
Described in long creeds!

Hark!—rattle! rattle! rattle!—
WHY this rattle of dead men's bones
Over century cobble stones?
Should we, as descendants,
Lose all independence?
Can we not espy
Our needs? THEN LET S DIE!
Just dump us on stones—
Away! rattling bones!

Berkeley, Cal., March 27, 1900. VIROQUA DANIELS.

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FREEDOM OR SEMI-SLAVERY, WHICH?

"There are some people," said my friend to me, "who must have a boss." Is it true? And if true, is the condition natural or acquired? If the latter, will these persons who walk with a chain gain the courage for independent locomotion so long as support is thrust before them?

We act in concord with our thought. Servility and submissive slavery show the will to be in subjection. We bow and smirk before our divinely appointed but incompetent overseers—and starve! The starving proves the incompetency. Arrogance and cunning have never yet been allied with sufficient wisdom to both rule and feed the entire world. As to divine instrumentality in the appointing of bosses, whether of heriditary monarchies, the chosen of "the people," commercial magnates, or "holy men," that is still, with many, an open question.

In this age what we choose to call democracy is the fashion. The democratic tendencies of the times intrude themselves into everything in comical and pathetic ways. We are democratic in our obsequiousness and in our robberies. The road to greatness is open to all, you understand. The black magic of profit in trade, profit in labor, speculation, politics, priestcraft, rent, interest, etc., etc., is our common inheritance—have we but the ability to use it!

Did the re-adjustment of social conditions imply merely the sweeping away a distinct difference in classes, such as is apparent in the system of chattel slavery to the dullest vision, the task would be comparatively easy. But the tangle commercialism has drawn us into is a difficult one to straighten out. There is no idea tangible or intangible, no object animate or inanimate, which the trade jugglers do not buy and sell and "corner." The combination that controls the land, the means of production and distribution, has the world at bay. It graciously or superciliously, as policy or temper directs, accords to some of the human race the privilege of laboring and living, and denies it to others; thus we have the employed and the unemployed. The interests of these people are identical; but the workers are so mystified by the intricate connections by which they are for the time being bound that they do not, as a rule, recognize the fact. The employed who are not wage laborers are engaged in a small way, doing a part or all the work themselves, in the same line of business as are the manipulators of industry. They trade, hold small notes bearing interest, possess an extra house, farm or store which they rent, speculate, etc., etc. They indulge in similar but petty exactions, cheats and tyrannies; in truth, they are provided with "just enough rope to hang themselves."

Now the question is: Will they use the rope for the purpose the powerful expect and intend it shall be used?

A revolution is upon us. Those revolting at the present "order" desire a better one in its place.

We wish to be civilized; can that which in the doing degrades one portion of our fellows produce results that will be civilizing to the other? How can the elevation be permanent that does not lift all? Must one part of humanity overwork and endure privation that the other part may have leisure for culture?

Are any of the old methods of accumulating wealth to be retained? Accumulations of wealth mean the control of bread, and the control of bread means the control of individuals. Shall we assume that mankind, regardless of sex or nationality, has a right to walk alone? Suppose some stagger and fall, do they not do so now, never having the opportunity to do otherwise? Is it better to depend upon society as a body, giving to it and from it receiving, or upon individuals who have power to give or to withhold? Which will be the most productive of brotherly feelings, the free union of efforts as equals, or the working for wages with its ever present implication of the inferiority of the working man? Have we the ingenuity to produce and exchange the necessities and comforts of life with no political supervision? Without courts to enforce them, contracts could be broken with impunity. Confusion would reign. Would a contract which was mutually beneficial be broken? And if one of the contractors received benefits to the detriment of the other, ought it not be broken? Does the multitude require a system of bosses? When will the fear of everlasting punishment and the fear of the law be unnecessary to preserve order? What shall be our new declaration of independence?—Viroqua Daniels.

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HOW JESUS WOULD EDIT A DAILY PAPER.

How fortunate for us it is that the Rev. Sheldon has no legal power to enforce his ideas as to "what Jesus would do"! He has been giving the world a sample of a daily paper run as Jesus would have conducted it—according to his idea—and the public was not especially startled with its holiness or overpowered by its grandeur. If one *knew* that it represented Christ's ideal, one must regret that the Nazarene had so little literary ability. But it was not claimed that Jesus would be an up-to-date divinity, up in twentieth century journalistic devices and methods; the Jesus in Sheldon's mind was probably the old fashioned, two thousand years ago personage who had little notion of latter day journalism, and modern literature.

But Sheldon has not lived up to the character of the old Jesus as portrayed in the four gospels and the acts of the apostles. That personage was very unconventional, and observed few of the recognized standards of morals of that day. He had no home, but wandered like any tramp from one part of the country to another. He was bare-footed and poorly dressed, did not go regularly to church, and he was not thrifty and saving. He mingled with low people, he stole roasting ears on Sunday and probably built a fire and roasted them. More than all, he severely condemned the rich, he called them thieves and robbers, and he threatened them with all sorts of misfortunes; he thrashed the money brokers and threw away their money, and at last by his incendiary talk and radical and unconventional actions got himself arrested and finally put to death by the "law and order" element, just as such a person might in these days. Now, what is there in this kind of life and character that makes Sheldon think he would run a dull, methodical newspaper which did not give the news, that would eliminate all the petty, shady advertisements and incidents that might contaminate the minds of his readers (ignorance being considered an insurance against corruption), that contained not one word of condemnation of the methods by which pious millionaires pile up their wealth, not one word against the conventional and legal means of robbing the laborer of the fruits of his toil, which filled up one day's number out of the week with prosy, orthodox dissertations and leaves out a Sunday edition altogether? Certainly the Jesus I was acquainted with in my Sunday school days wouldn't have dreamed of such a thing.

Now, if I were to run a newspaper as Jesus would have run it, it would be a very different affair. I would have to consider that Jesus had kept up with the times, and was in line with all the modern journalists, knew what he was about, and how to secure "scoops." He would have the latest and best of everything. He would print all the scientific discoveries, surmises, speculations and theories; he would give his readers the benefit of every new philosophy, theory and doctrine promulgated that they might judge for themselves what they would believe. He would expose with merciless hand the schemes of our Rockefellers, our Wanamakers and our Vanderbilts; he would urge upon the people the necessity of abolishing the present, monopolistic, authoritative, robbing system and of instituting a brotherhood in which all should have an equal chance, all possess equal freedom. He would plead the cause of the criminals who had been given no chance to be men and women. He would print letters from the prostitutes whenever they had been "pulled," that the public might hear who else was to blame. He would allow Tom, Dick and Harry, of the tramp fraternity to tell their stories in his columns; he would illustrate his pages with pictures of sweatshops and underground mines, of Wardner "bullpens," of white soldiers ravaging the country of their darkskinned fellow men fighting for their liberties. He would give daily announcements of Anarchist meetings, and radical reading rooms, and of places where radical comrades could be found. And no wrong, no helpless victim, no bondage, but he would have ferreted out and shown up in its true light. And he would engage the most eloquent writers in the country to do this work.

Now, no doubt there would go up from the people a greater howl than we unconventional people are likely to make over Sheldon's sample of a "Christian newspaper." But I have as good a right to suppose what Jesus would do with a daily paper as Sheldon has, and as neither can enforce our ideas, we are not likely to create a revolution in either direction. But how many Christians would *like* to thrust Sheldon's dull, pious, commonplace, conception of a "newspaper" upon the public if they could? Security from the infliction lies in the fact that dogmatism cannot wield the power it once did. LIZZIE M. HOLMES.

Denver, Colo., 3163 W. 38th Ave.

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"If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it go, let it go: perchance it will wear smooth,—certainly the machine will wear out."—Thoreau.

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Anarchy.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal; absolute individual liberty.—Century Dictionary.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

In compliance with requests by a number of new subscribers the articles of our sick comrade Viroqua Daniels, which appeared in The Firebrand, will be reprinted seriatim in Free Society. In this connection it is gratifying to state that Viroqua's condition is steadily improving as will be noticed by the poem on the first page of this issue—her first effort since she has undergone her last treatment.

Of course she is still very weak in consequence of much loss of blood and still requires the attendance of the physician and nurse, but her malady is conquered; she is positively out of danger and convalescent, and the recovery of her vitality and with it her return to the ranks of active propagandists is but a question of time—perhaps only a few months. A. I.

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Woodruff of New York is a candidate for the Republican nomination for the vice-presidency. At a big banquet the other day in Michigan, he shouted the praises of imperialism, and raised the pigmy McKinley to the ranks of a demi-god. I cannot refute his argument; for he made none. His whole speech was an appeal to jingoism, and all opponents of robbery and oppression were courteously described as "Benedict Arnolds," "Tories," and "Copperheads." General Boynton followed him, and declared that the ancestors of the present anti-imperialists wrested land from the Indians by the sword, and perfected their titles thro' force. Yet he believes those titles are good today! He stated that the anti-imperialists are "unadulterated Anarchists." By no means, general! The anti-imperialist would establish liberty in the Philippine Islands; but the Anarchist would establish it everywhere. Under Anarchy there will be no land titles founded on force and fraud, and no such parasites as yourself paid at public expense to strut about the country, and lie to the people.

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The Roman Catholic church is on the point of excommunicating its last man of science, St. George Mivart. He cannot swallow some of the demonstrably false Bible yarns; and so he must go. The church is still the congenial home of the bats and owls of ignorance, and hates nothing so much as an honest and intelligent man.

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Professor Hyslop is likely to be bounced from Columbia College, because he has become converted to Spiritualism. A few months ago Professor Schenck received his dismissal from the University of Vienna for the crime of propounding a theory for determining the sex of an unborn child. Brown University got rid of President Andrews for advocating free silver; and Professor Herron had to leave Iowa University for preaching Socialism. That is the way in which the educational institutions of today encourage originality and independence of thought. Everywhere it is held an offence for a man to think for himself. At Yale College, the boys are even forced to give up their secret societies. Authority seeks to pry into everything, and always with the result of making more mischief than it prevents.

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Some sneaking fools in New York have secured the arrest of Olga Nethersole, on the ground that "Sappho" is an indecent play. The charge is too absurd to emanate from any brain but that of an ass or a blackmailer. Olgo Nethersole is devoted to her art, and is one of the finest actresses on the stage. The play is founded on a famous novel of Daudet, and is a faithful study of human nature. Those miserable prudes who wish everybody to be as ignorant and as foul-minded as themselves, are not obliged to attend the performance, if they do not like it. Nothing animates them but the spirit of persecution. The only way to render such reptiles harmless is to abolish that authority through which they are able to spit their venom at all who have more sense than themselves.

An anti-polygamy amendment to the constitution is being strenously advocated by all the haters of liberty. The minority have no rights, except such as the majority may charitably allow them. Of course, polygamy is a terrible thing in this country, though the imperialists who denounce it so fiercely are contented that it should prevail in the American possession of Sulu. The only principle which seems to animate the empire-plotters is to enslave the people both here and in Sulu by whatever means prove most efficacious.

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Senator Clark spent $115,000 to be elected United States senator. The price is too high for the ordinary citizen; but it takes considerable to buy a Montana legislature.

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Republican congressmen admitted in open debate that they voted for the Porto Rico tariff swindle, in order to please McKinley. There was once a tradition that congressmen were elected to legislate in the interests of the people and for the welfare of the country. That myth, however, has been long since exploded. The servants of the people are now their masters, and their only concern is the policy which will keep them in power, and enable them to fatten on the folly of their dupes.

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Anti-trust conferences continee to play their little comedy of attempting to smother the symptoms, without curing the disease. A conference is an admirable scheme for doing nothing. You cannot breed anything except trusts out of the capitalist system of industry; and all attempts to break them down must prove futile, as long as we have not a free society. They can get around any laws, survive any boycott or ostracism, laugh at publicity, and crush competition. The Anarchist alone sees the source of the evil, and prepares the remedy which shall destroy it forever.

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One of the silliest crusades is that against department stores. They are absolutely within the law, and a perfectly legitimate outgrowth of modern industry. Allow the private ownership of the sources of natural wealth; and you must allow all the monopolistic institutions that grow out of it.

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Emperor William of Germany has more than eight million dollars a year as his personal income, and wants to bleed the German people for another million. Yet there are sycophants, both in Germany and in America, who have only words of praise for this basest of parasites. He devours the people's money, and looks with complacent indifference on the suffering of his subjects. His is the true spirit of the ruling class, in whose eyes the mass of the people are fit only to be beasts of burden. Emperor, czar, king, or president, the habits of the beast are the same. Yet some people still look on the Anarchist as a monster, because he would arouse popular intelligence to the point of dethroning the entire horde.

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The heartlessness of capital is evidenced in southeastern Kansas, where, under "McKinley prosperity," the miners' wages have been cut ten per cent. The miner, who lives like a dog, is already the worst paid of laborers. Monopolists and middlemen make immense profits off his unpaid labor. To cut his already scanty wages, is the act of a fiend. An effort will be made to resist the cut; but as the scoundrels who ordered it are rich, able to import scab labor, and backed by a government which is always against the workingman, there seems to be but little hope. Redress will only come in the day of the social revolution. J. F. M.

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THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

. . . Tonight we were having an animated discussion of the czar's late peace conference, when the door swung open to a stamping foot and Jim came in shaking the wet off his coat and holding out his hands to the cheery blaze. . . .

He seemed unusually silent, and the captain looked up with a laugh: "Tough night, this, Jim, old boy! But you may as well get used to it. This big peace meeting of all the tribes will dispose of armies and you and I will have to look for another job. No more war, they say; so no need for soldiers or army surgeons. You'll be ahead of me anyway, for folks are always sick somewhere, army or no army."

"Bah!" growled Jim through his teeth. "Peace conference be hanged! Fine thing to preach peace when we breed war from palace to hovel; when nine-tenths of us come into the world Ishmaelites, our hand against every man and every man's hand against us. Pretty world this, overrun with philanthropic fools, all busy varnishing effects whose causes they prefer to ignore as unfit for decent minds. My God, boys! When I think of it I wonder we are not all imbeciles or criminals."

"Well, not that exactly," he continued sadly; "but I've watched a woman die tonight; a woman so brave and earnest and noble-hearted that a king must have respected her, though she was only a rancher's wife. I've seen death often enough, and in many forms, but this will haunt me forever. I was powerless to save her, and she knew it; for months she had looked death in the face and set her house in order for his coming. Her six little children were gathered around the bed to say goodbye; she had patiently told them that 'mama was going on a long, long journey, and they must be good to each other and grow up honest men and women.' The sixth was only a tiny toddler, scarcely taking his first steps, and by her side lay the seventh, a pitiful morsel of unwelcome, unneeded humanity, for whose existence the mother was paying with her life. He slept peacefully, but his baby brother caught at his mother's fast-chilling hands and pulled himself up by the bed, begging; 'Tate Boydo, muvver; Boydo so ti'ed.' Poor baby! at whose birth I had told the father plainly that another such event would cost the mother's life.

"When she had recovered a little from the nearness of death I told her too, and never while I live shall I forget the hopelessness that came into her eyes.

"She sent for me a few months later, and as their ranch was on the main road I invented some excuse to stop every time I was near. They were very poor; the father was a hard-working man and an honest one, but a poor manager, and no one will ever know the toil and hardship that woman underwent to make a home for her children and keep them fed and clothed. Without much education, she was keenly ambitious for knowledge and devoured with pathetic eagerness the few books that came in her way. She was always clean and tidy, and when she turned from the steaming tubs, where she added to their slender income by washing heavy shirts for the miners, she was as much a lady in manner as the mistress of the White House. The husband was not an ignorant man; he read the political papers and discussed tariff and silver ably; but if he ever noticed his wife's more refined tastes at all it was with tolerance or open amusement. He was kind to his family in an easy-going way that made small demands on his selfishness, but he had tobacco while his wife went barefoot, and joked about the never-filled woodbox. Just an average man of the people; a good citizen, a good husband and father as far as his means went, you would say—yet more truly a murderer than many a one who swings on the gallows.

"Do you wonder that the poor woman's soul was filled with bitterness in those weary months when she walked comrade with Death? That as she watched her soon-to-be motherless children she burned with hatred for the selfish cause? What will become of them? I don't know. The father will marry again, and they will be scattered among strangers. Their case is only one of thousands.

"I am thinking of the poor little mite who came into the world tonight. He is one of thousands, too; one of thousands born of uncurbed passion on one side and enforced submission on the other. Is his little heart aching with his mother's agony, I wonder? Would it be strange if his life repeated those prenatal months of sorrow and despair, ending in some outburst of uncontrollable passion?

"Poor little mite! The asylums and prisons and city streets are full of his brothers and sisters; hapless beings forced into existence in pain and hatred and terror when all nature cried out against

the desecration. Conceived to hunger and poverty and scant care from work-filled hands that would have held one babe or two a heavenly heritage, but sink before the misery awaiting ten.

"Nobody wants him; there is no place in the world waiting him. As a child, if he escapes the workhouse or reform school, it is to be known as 'the dullest boy in school,' or 'the worst boy in the neighborhood.' As a man he gravitates naturally into the ranks of criminals or the great army of fitfully employed, who wander up and down the world seeking bed and bread in any corner.

"If chance grant him a home, it is only to repeat there the tragedy of his own existence, and if fortune give him a place in public life it is only to vent there his inherited discord and restlessness, and to embroil his followers in great or petty strife. War is his destiny; only in the clash of battle do clashing instincts of his nature find parallel and temporary repose.

"There are a good many things beside Krupp guns and Lyddite to be considered in the peace meetings of the world, and he is one of them. Who has found life so good that he dare pass it on under blackest circumstances, entailing a lifetime's misery for a moment's gratification? Not till the Angel of Love alone heralds the dawn of life shall we do away with war and contending armies. Till man has planted the seeds of justice in his own heart he will never gather the blossoms of peace abroad, though all the world confer for the harvesting."—Sharlot M. Hall, in Secular Science and Common Sense, Chicago, Ill.

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AN EXPLANATION.

Not very long ago the motives of Wm. Holmes were assailed in Free Society, and Comrade Addis valliantly wielded the cudgels in defense of Holmes, as an honest man. Later I find Addis making an unkind fling at Voltairine de Cleyre, stating that "her attitude in regard to Communists, and her sneers at woodchoppers, gardeners and painters, who presume to write for radical papers, makes her far from an all-around representative of our movement."

From what I have learned of Voltairine, and from a short correspondence with her, I am thoroughly convinced that the charge as regards "sneers" at the literary productions of "woodchopppers," etc., simply because of their occupation, is utterly untrue; and comes from a misapprehension on the part of Addis, who got the idea from a hastily written controversy in a private letter. Voltairine has a sensitive nature and is very critical in regard to artistic and literary productions of her fellow workmen. She does not look at the wordly position of a literary workman, but at the manner in which he drapes and folds his words about an idea. If the idea goes forth with clothes askew and down at the heels, Voltairine sometimes considers it a detriment to the cause she loves, and refuses to fraternize to any great extent with such writers. I do not agree with her view of the matter, but I *do* affirm that she is good and true, and honest, and devoted to the cause of human liberty. Her life testifies to this.

While I lean toward free Communism and Voltairine de Cleyre is of the Individualist school, yet I know the goal of each is *liberty*, and its adherents will never stop short of that gaol, so let us make common cause against a common enemy.

To "heap coals of fire" on Addis' head, I will inform him that among the "woodchoppers, painters," etc., who write for radical papers, are those whose literary productions please Voltairine de Cleyre, among the number being Henry Addis.

There are a number of radicals who hold to a high standard of literary merit, and refuse to co-operate in the effort to keep Free Society alive. But of several Anarchist publications in the English language in the past six years, the little light on the Pacific coast has so far proved itself the "fittest to survive." This example ought to be a lesson to those who have erred in their judgment to the extent of refusing to co-operate with every worthy effort, however crude, that aims at the overthrow of the present system. But while regretting their attitude as unwise and more hurtful to the cause than any crudeness on the part of raw recruits, let us not question the honesty of their motives. Time will, if it has not already done so, prove to those sticklers for well polished literary productions, that in the cause of human liberty the right idea, be it ever so awkwardly expressed, does its work worthily. There are all classes and conditions of men to reach. As well condemn a man for a badly fitting suit, as the medium of noble ideas for badly constructed sentences.

For my part I care more for a true conception of the basic principles of liberty, than I do for the garb that clothes the ideas. I rather think that those who did the work on the old Firebrand and who have stood by Free Society, do not lack either brains or literary talent; but they need a little more material support.

Caplinger Mills, Mo. KATE AUSTIN.

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SNAPSHOTS.

The increased need of advancing the morals of this country is being amply attended to through the suppression of "Sappho," the arrest of a Philadelphia bookseller for having sold the book, and various other acts of solicitous suppression on the part of Comstock. I think that venerable idiot is digging a bottomless grave—the question but remains, When shall we hold the funeral service?

* * *

Philadelphia had a swell wedding recently, at which the wedded received something like 1064 presents. At that rate I believe I'll forsake my radicalism to finally be able, through a judicious sale of my person, to embark in the general merchandise business. They are offering great bribes to ensnare the unwary, that is certain.

* * *

The Chicago Chronicle of recent date contains a picture of Emma Goldman, with the information that she is there to lead the strikers. I wonder if Emma has an "astral body" that she can jump such long distances unknown to any of us? It shows a hatred for her I hardly anticipated at this stage of the game.

* * *

Morton arrived and has addressed several well attended meetings. The Twentieth Century Woman's Club, which met at Lizzie Holmes' house recently, listened to a long paper on "Direct Legislation," by an ex-representative. Afterwards Morton and I were asked to speak,—being the visitors. Morton talked straight Anarchism, and did not shock them either. I was pleased to note their interest in his ideas. And I had the pleasure of being roasted by Morton for being prudish and having disgraced myself by signing myself as "Miss." But when the good Lord or some other unwise friend gave me a name utterly sexless, what am I to do? Hereafter I won't do such a thing; and when Comrade Byington "Misters" me again, call him down, please.

* * *

I do not agree with Addis about having Victor Southworth agitate for the movement. Southworth is too young in the movement, and not well enough grounded in the philosophy. My extreme admiration for Voltairine de Cleyre makes me champion her for that place. She is so thorough and such a brainy woman, that to me she is the only logical person to send out. I am inclined to be prejudiced enough to say Voltairine or no one. [Fortunately such prejudiced minds stand isolated in the movement.—Compositor.]

Denver, Colo., 603 Chas. Blk. BERT F. BRUKK.

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"DULL WITTS" VS. INCONSISTENCY.

Since the discussion of the interesting as well as important question of Anarchist tactics has been started by my stepping on comrade Wm. Holmes' corns, Susan Patton has defended consistency much more ably than I could do it. Yet I will answer my friend Holmes, as he states a hypothetical case.

In the first place, a convinced Anarchist as an advocate of propaganda by deed, when committing an act of retribution, does so independently, according to his own principles, and knows and accepts the responsibility. He is fully aware of the consequences and expects, if taken, no more mercy than he showed by committing the deed; and it matters little or nothing to him whether there are or are not any comrades on the jury to judge him. I ask Holmes, as a clever lawyer: Is there any need of propaganda by deed in a society where five or six Anarchists can be secured on every jury? I think if that were the case, the present society would be tottering and going to pieces quickly.

The arguments used by Holmes I have heard often by individuals who posed as Anarchists when in company of comrades, but who acted quite differently in other company, and such arguments I consider but an excuse for hypocrisy and cowardice, similar to the practise in the U. S. Senate where the word "lie" is never passed, but nicely circumscribed as for instance: "The senator from so and so does not state the facts exactly according to the truth," etc. This round about way may suit our lawyer Holmes, but I prefer the blunt word, as more expressive to my dull wits. Nor do I feel ashamed of confessing frankly, that it is only cowardice which keeps me from doing any propaganda by deed. Nevertheless I advocate it according to circumstances; and I am convinced this is the case with most comrades, if they are frank with themselves.

Comrade Holmes says: "My morals are my own." Exactly, and so are mine! If he takes the liberty of criticizing those who censured Cohen, then I am free to critcize Comrade Holmes for doing so; my opinion is as good as his. If it is ignorance to deny the authority of B. Tucker, the so-called commercial Anarchist who upholds private property and competition, then I certainly cheerfully plead guilty to Holmes' charge; and it surprises me that he discusses the ethics of Anarchism with one who, as he says, is unfit to discuss it. In the lawyer's language I think Holmes has "a weak case" of this.

The gist of Holmes' argument is this: "No one in the present society can be consistent to the principles of Anarchism." As I stated before, this old stock argument is used at every reproach to cover our weakness. According to this, Anarchism is very cheap indeed, and requires no sacrifice at all; any Anarchist may take the place of a striker under this excuse, and we may go to church and smile apologetically at our critics and say: "Business reasons." We may equally apply for the position of a hangman, because one trade is as good as another, or we might run as a candidate for office for the same reasons. Hugh O. Pentecost was at least frank and honest in stating that he wanted to make a better living than he could do as an Anarchist, and therefore became a lawyer.

A consistent Anarchist cannot be a wage-slave in the present hypocritical society, nor could he consistently make a living in any profession, it is true. But that is no reason to wish for all Anarchists to be wage-slaves, be ause the individual lot of an Anarchist would be more consoling, if that is the drift of Holmes' argument regarding Anarchist judges, lawyers, etc.

Why should we endeavor to justify our actions by sophistry, instead of admitting the fact that we are all subject to circumstances and environment?! Under the prevailing conditions even a capitalist is not to be blamed for accumulating wealth and exploiting labor, for existing society encourages him; but as capitalism, law, government, etc., are abstract things, we can only oppose and overthrow them by fighting those who uphold them. Thus I think the poorest wage slave, who throws his job contemptuously at the feet of his employer, or one who refuses to sit on a jury, does more for freedom than a lawyer with law tactics in court and Anarchist principles *in his pocket!* The former *protests and leads by example*, while the latter cringingly *follows the customary law.*

I still claim that an Anarchist judge is an impossibility, until proven the contrary, for the simple reason that as soon as he acted upon Anarchist principles, he would be minus his job. If a judge whispers into my ear: "I am an Anarchist," and then convicts a poor devil who stole a loaf of bread, is he an Anarchist? Sympathy and passive agreement with revolutionary ideas have never effected reform, much less will they overthrow this society. Jean Grave says in his book, "Moribund Society and Anarchy": "As to those who seek to profit by existing institutions, ostensibly for the purpose of aiding the propaganda of new ideas, they are ambitious knaves, who flatter the future in order to enjoy the present in peace!" I hope Holmes will read Grave's book, especially the last two chapters of it, and that he will in future be less abusive of "dull wits." R. STREIT.

* * * * *

"Is it not a fact this day, this hour, workingmen are wearing themselves out in all parts of the earth for us? Coolies are at work preparing our tea in the fields of China; Negroes on southern plantations are toiling from sunrise to sunset to provide us with cotton; farmers in the west are, with the sweat of their brows, watering the broad prairies that give us the staff of life; factory hands in Great Britain and Germany and France, as well as at home, are leading cheerless lives to supply us with luxuries; miners in Pennsylvania and Colorado and Cornwall are robbed of the light of day that we may have comforts or pleasure. These are all laboring for us, what are we doing for them?"—Ernest Howard Crosby.

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COMPULSORY VACCINATION REPUDIATED.

After reading Kate Austin's article on "Compulsory Vaccination," I decided to give the readers of Free Society a brief history of the manner in which we combated this old superstition here in Provincetown, Mass. When Frank D. Blue started his little paper Vaccination, he sent me a copy, and, finding out what it was, I at once ordered five copies for one year and have taken this number ever since. With these papers and the little vaccination slips that are sent out from the office, I went to work to create a sentiment in this locality against the further enforcement of the State law that makes it mandatory on school boards to have all the children inoculated with the essence of a sick calf before entering the public schools. This was an easy thing to do, for, while we have not had a case of smallpox in Provincetown for more than 20 years, there has been sickness and death right along as the direct result of vaccination.

The chairman of our School Board is an intelligent and liberal-minded man and we soon had him working with us. A reading of the law showed that, while it was obligatory on the school boards not to have children go into the school without first being vaccinated, there was no penalty going with it in case they did not see fit to enforce it, so we started a petition, addressed to the School Committee, asking them to refrain from any enforcement of the law.

Provincetown for the past seven years has had a superintendent of schools, and this man, in spite of the opportunity he has had to see the evil effects of vaccination, pretends still to believe that it is a good thing and that the law should be carried out, so when the petition was laid before the board, he told the committee that he had been taking his orders relative to the enforcement of the law from the town Board of Health, which has a doctor for chairman.

On learning this fact the committee turned the petition over to the Board of Health, but they said nothing about it until they made up their annual report, in which they devoted a whole page to insulting the petitioners, attempting to show that the law was a just one, therefore should be enforced, and declaring that vaccination certainly did save people from having the smallpox.

In a subsequent town meeting I started the music by moving that the whole page in the report, relating to the vaccination business, be stricken out, and after some little debate the motion was laid on the table only to be called up again at the evening session, before a gathering of probably twelve hundred men, women and children.

Dr. W. S. Birge, chairman of the Board of Health, made an attempt to defend his report, but after speaking twice he was so completely floored by the opposition that he had nothing more to say. Shortly after, the motion was voted on and the anti-vaccinationists carried the vote by an overwhelming majority.

The next night, in order to get the true sentiment of the meeting on the question, the writer introduced the following resolution: "Resolved, That it is the wish of the citizens of Provincetown, as expressed in open town meeting, that the Board of Health will refrain from any further enforcement of the State law, which requires all children to be vaccinated before entering the public schools."

The introduction of this resolution immediately brought on a red hot debate and the opposition, led by a Methodist minister, attempted to table it, and the vote was finally ordered to be taken by a yea and nay ballot, the result being that the meeting refused to lay it on the table by a vote of 142 to 45. Shortly after, the vote was taken on the main question by a vote of hands, and the believers in compulsory vaccination were completely overthrown, so that—as the case stands now—if our Board of Health insists on enforcing the law, the members will be "dropped" as fast as their terms expire.

Our victory may encourag men and women in other communities to take like action to rid themselves of this superstition. Upon receipt of the news of our victory Dr. W. P. Wesselhoeft of Boston, who is one of the leading physicians of the country, wrote me a letter of congratulation and sent me a copy of Alfred Russell Wallace's new book "The Wonderful Century; Its Successes and its Failures," which has a chapter of over 100 pages devoted to the "Vaccination Delusion." Mr. Wallace declares that there is not a particle of evidence to prove that vaccination ever saved a single human being from having the smallpox, while there is an abundance of proof to show that it has caused the death of untold thousands.

The destruction of this huge fraud is a work that any Anarchist ought to be interested in, and if I have outlined the proper way to go for it, this article will not have been written in vain.

In closing I challenge any doctor to make a defense of vaccination in Free Society; for, if is it such good thing, there ought to be plenty of M. D.'s to defend it in the radical papers. J. T. SMALL.

NOT HANDSOME, BUT CLEVER.

W. S. Bell, author of "Popular Delusions Regarding Popular Government," etc., writes from Denver in a private letter to a comrade, regarding James F. Morton, Jr.:

"Yesterday (March 12) I went to Morton's lectue. I had never heard or seen him before. He is a young man about 30 years of age, red-headed and not handsome, but he i- a first class speaker. He gave more general satisfaction than any other speaker we listened to for a long time. He is not eloquent nor even enthusia tic, but he speaks without any breaks and has the best pronunciation of any man I have ever heard in the west."

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